

Financing of the Norwegian open access journals

In June 2008, I completed a Bachelor's thesis on the financing of Norwegian open access journals (OA journals) in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor's degree in Library and Information Sciences at the Oslo University College. This article will present the main results of my findings.

At the time of my research, there were 12 OA journals in Norway. Since then, the number has increased and at present, there are more than 15 OA journals in Norway (DOAJ, 2008). The Norwegian OA journals can be divided into two main groups: Institutional journals and society journals. The majority of the journals are institutional: Acta Didactica Norge, Chironomus Newsletter on Chironomidae Research, Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Nordlit, Nordlyd, Seminar.net and Voices: a World Forum for Music Therapy. The society journals include Norwegian Dental Journal, Norwegian Journal of Epidemiology, Norwegian Journal of Geology and The Journal of the Norwegian Medical Association.

The best known business model for open access journals is funding by the article processing charge (APC), a fee generally paid by the author's patron or institution. Another common business model is direct funding from institutions or associations. Other examples of business models are revenues from advertising and membership fees, sponsorships, and alternative incomes like the use of electronic marketplaces. Most OA journals are funded through a combination of different models.

The interviews I conducted show that there are differences between institutional journals and society journals concerning the selection of business models. The institutional journals, which mainly belong to the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences, are funded by support from their hosting institutions and through voluntary contributions in the form of free editorial services. These kinds of journals possess a low degree of control over authors' rights, often allowing the authors to publish their contributions in other publishing channels, like in institutional repositories. These journals also often appear to have financial problems, and there is expressed concern about the future of their financing.

Society journals, all belonging to the fields of Science, Technology, and Medicine are in

general well financed. Their funding comes mainly through revenues from advertising and membership fees, and they rely less on voluntary contributions. It is also apparent that the society journals have a higher degree of control over the authors' rights.

Common features for the Norwegian OA journals are that they are largely based on voluntary contributions. External support and sponsorship are almost absent as business models. Article processing charges have not been officially tried out in Norway. There is, however, one case of voluntary APC and another case in which a journal charges for articles exceeding a set number of pages. All in all, it appears as though the journals that do not receive income from advertising or from membership fees are having financial difficulties. This is the case for the largest group of OA journals in Norway, and one can therefore argue that there is a necessity for alternative business models for OA journals in Norway.

Business models:

	Voluntary contr.	Internal Support	Eksternal support	Sponsorship	Cooperation	APC	Advertising	Subscription	Membership fees
Acta Didactica Norge	X	X							
Chironomius Newsletter	X	X			X				
Journal of Arabic and Islamic studies	X	X			X				
Nordlit.	X	X							
Nordlyd	X	X							
Seminar.net	X	X	X						
Voices	X	X			X	(X)			
Norwegian Dental Journal							X		X
Norwegian Journal of Epidemiolo.	X		X	X					X
Norwegian Journal of Geology	X					(X)		X	
The Journal of the Norwegian Medical Association							X		
Dictum	X								

(x) = Voices: Voluntary APC

Norwegian Journal of Geology: Charging for articles exceeding a set number of pages.

Referanser

Bratland, Else Dagfrid (2008). *Finansieringsmodeller for norske open access tidsskrifter: ein kvalitativ undersøkelse*. Oslo: Høgskolen i Oslo.

DOAJ (2008). *Directory of Open Access Journals: Find journals*. Retrieved from:
<http://www.doaj.org/doaj?func=findJournals&hybrid=&query=norway>